

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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REPORTS ON WATERFOWL NESTING CONDITIONS IN NORTHERN CANADA

"Waterfowl populations in northern Canada generally appear to be about the same as last year," Robert H. Smith, flyway biologist for the Fish and Wildlife Service, has advised Director Albert M. Day in a progress report for Northwest Territories on June 7.

In continuing their surveys of the Canadian waterfowl breeding grounds, the observers covered an area of about 22 miles in the Lake Claire marshes of Alberta where they found the population of ducks to be a little more than 50 per square mile. This was a slight increase over last year.

To the north, in the Athabaska delta, the population dropped to only 25 ducks per square mile. Continuing north through the aspen park country, from Ft. Smith to Great Slave Lake, the observers found less than one duck per square mile.

Water levels are high--in some places abnormally so--the same as in the prairies, Mr. Smith reported. Many lakes and sloughs in northern Saskatchewan have water for the first time in several years. The Athabaska delta in northern Alberta is completely flooded although the Lake Claire marshes to the west have optimum water levels for duck breeding. "This abnormally high water will affect the waterfowl crop adversely, particularly in the Athabaska delta."

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